



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/661,242	09/12/2003	Choong-Chin Liew	4231/2042	9495

29933 7590 09/29/2005

PALMER & DODGE, LLP
KATHLEEN M. WILLIAMS
111 HUNTINGTON AVENUE
BOSTON, MA 02199

EXAMINER

O'FARRELL, THOMAS JOHN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1634

DATE MAILED: 09/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/661,242

Applicant(s)

LIEW ET AL.

Examiner

Thomas J. O'Farrell

Art Unit

1634

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-36 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-12, drawn to nucleic acids, classified in class 536, subclass 23.1.
This group is subject to further restriction (see below).
 - II. Claims 13-28, and 34-36, drawn to methods of diagnosing osteoarthritis, classified in class 435, subclass 6. This group is subject to further restriction (see below).
 - III. Claims 29-36, drawn to methods for monitoring the efficacy of a drug for treatment of osteoarthritis, classified in class 514, subclass 1. This group is subject to further restriction (see below).

2. Groups 1-3 are subject to further restriction. It is clear that the nucleic acids disclosed in Figures 1-7 and structurally and functionally distinct. Regarding group 1, the applicant is required to elect a specific set of genes from those identified in Figs. 1, 3, 5, 6a and 7a, or 6b, or 6c, or 2, 4, 5, 6d and 7b for the examination of group 1. Claims not drawn to the elected set of genes will be withdrawn from consideration. Regarding group 2, the applicant is required to elect one or a specific set of genes from those identified in Figs. 1, 3, 5, 6a and 7a, or 6b, or 6c, or 2, 4, 5, 6d and 7b for the examination of group 2. Claims not drawn to the elected gene or set of genes will be withdrawn from consideration. Regarding group 3, the applicant is required to elect a

Art Unit: 1634

specific set of genes from those identified in Figs. 1, 3, 5, 6a and 7a, or 6b, or 6c, or 2, 4, 5, 6d, and 7b, or one gene identified in Figs. 1-7 (claim 33) for the examination of group 3. Claims not drawn to the elected gene or set of genes will be withdrawn from consideration. This is NOT an election of species. Nucleotide sequences encoding different proteins are structurally distinct chemical compounds and are unrelated to one another. These sequences are thus deemed to normally constitute independent and distinct inventions within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. 121. Absent evidence to the contrary, each such nucleotide sequence are presumed to represent an independent and distinct invention, subject to restriction requirement pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 121 and 37 CFR 1.141. By statute, "[i]f two or more independent and distinct inventions are claimed in one application, the Commissioner may require the application to be restricted to one of the inventions." 35 U.S.C. 121. Pursuant to this statute, the rules provide that "[i]f two or more independent and distinct inventions are claimed in a single application, the examiner in his action shall require the applicant... to elect that invention to which his claim shall be restricted." 37 CFR 1.142 (a). See also 37 CFR 1.141(a). It is noted that searching more than one of the claimed patentably distinct sequences represents a serious burden for the office.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

3. Inventions in groups 1 and groups 2 and 3 are related as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another

Art Unit: 1634

materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (MPEP § 806.05(h)). In the instant case the nucleic acids of group 1 can be used to encode polypeptides, which are not required to practice the methods of groups 2 and 3. Art relating to the detection of nucleic acids will not necessarily provide descriptive sequence information on the nucleic acid itself, and vice-versa.

4. Inventions of groups 2 and 3 are unrelated. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01). In the instant case the different inventions have different modes of operation, different functions, and different effects. Group 2 is drawn to methods of diagnosing osteoarthritis involving determining the level of expression of certain biomarkers in a sample, while group 3 is drawn to methods of monitoring the efficacy of a drug for treatment of osteoarthritis involving obtaining a sample from a patient before and after treatment, detecting the level of expression of biomarkers in the samples obtained before and after treatment, and determining the difference in the expression levels of the biomarkers before and after treatment wherein a difference in expression is indicative of the efficacy of the drug. Therefore, the inventions of groups 2 and 3 have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects.

5. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims.

Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined in accordance with the provisions of MPEP § 821.04. **Process claims that depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the patentable product** will be entered as a matter of right if the amendment is presented prior to final rejection or allowance, whichever is earlier. Amendments submitted after final rejection are governed by 37 CFR 1.116; amendments submitted after allowance are governed by 37 CFR 1.312.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103, and 112. Until an elected product claim is found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowed product claim will not be rejoined. See "Guidance on Treatment of Product and Process Claims in light of *In re Ochiai*, *In re Brouwer* and 35 U.S.C. § 103(b)," 1184 O.G. 86 (March 26, 1996). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, Applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution either to maintain

dependency on the product claims or to otherwise include the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.**

6. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

7. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for each group is not coextensive, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

8. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

9. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 CFR 1.143).

10. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim

Art Unit: 1634

remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

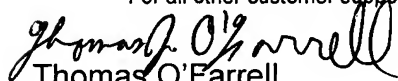
11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas O'Farrell whose telephone number is (571) 272-8782. The examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gary Jones, can be reached on (571) 272-0745. The fax phone number for this Group is (571) 273-8300.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to (571) 272-0547.

Patent applicants with problems or questions regarding electronic images that can be viewed in the Patent Application Information Retrieval system (PAIR) can now contact the USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center (Patent EBC) for assistance. Representatives are available to answer your questions daily from 6 am to midnight (EST). The toll free number is (866) 217-9197. When calling please have your application serial or patent number, the type of document you are having an image problem with, the number of pages and the specific nature of the problem. The Patent Electronic Business Center will notify applicants of the resolution of the problem within 5-7 business days. Applicants can also check PAIR to confirm that the problem has been corrected. The USPTO's Patent Electronic Business Center is a complete service center supporting all patent business on the Internet. The USPTO's PAIR system provides Internet-based access to patent application status and history information. It also enables applicants to view the scanned images of their own application file folder(s) as well as general patent information available to the public.

For all other customer support, please call the USPTO Call Center (UCC) at 800-786-9199.

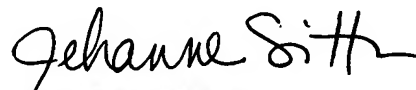


Thomas O'Farrell

Examiner

Art Unit 1634

9/23/05



JEHANNE SITTON
PRIMARY EXAMINER

9/23/05